



D4D's Foster Care Providers and Troy at our weekly Foster meetings - Train a Dog. Save a Live!

BRIGHT FUTURE

Hear from D4D'S new Executive Director about her promise to you for 2018! **p.2**

A NEW TEAM

Hear the "Happy Tails" of newly placed Client/Dog Team, Aileen and Reva. **p.3**

MEET THE PUPS

Check-out all the D4D superstars in training... each pup is working on their life-saving skills! **p.4**

Yellow Neener Photography



This has been an extremely busy time at D4D with our move to the new training center, continuing with all our regular training activities and work with our clients, supporters, volunteers and staff as well as completing a very successful year end mail campaign.

Five years ago, I stepped into a new role with D4D, after serving as a Board Member and Treasurer, to become the Executive Director. It has been a wonderful experience and allowed me to meet many new and prospective clients, volunteers and others who have become a part of our community. As part of that role, I was involved with other members of the Board, in interviewing a number of qualified candidates to fill the role of Development Director. Our objective was to build D4D's ability to deliver its mission and assure its continuity for the future.

Our transition plan allows me to continue in my volunteer role with D4D, as a member of the Board and Director of Finance. As a long time banking professional, I enjoy this work and hope to continue as long as my services are supportive. I love the community and service that D4D provides and hope to interact with all of you in this continuing role.

I would like to thank everyone for the great success that our year end mail campaign enjoyed. This allows us to continue to train more dogs, including introducing rescue dogs, from our partnership with Tony La Russo's Animal Rescue Foundation. This is a wonderful addition to our program, allowing D4D to build our program to serve people who may not be able to handle the wonderful Labs and Goldens we receive from our long-time cherished partner, Guide Dogs for the Blind. We know that each of these dogs will make a difference in the lives of our clients.

Having now completed our move to the new training center, I would like to thank the Ruefenacht Family for their generosity in making this wonderful facility available for D4D's future. I particularly want to thank Les Ruefenacht, who has been instrumental in the entire project, including actually making the move happen along with the dedicated support of one of our clients and devoted volunteers, Sandy Zied.

Sincerely,
Ralph Hendrix
Director of Finance and Vice President

KIBBLE FROM THE CORNER OFFICE

- Meet D4D's New Leadership...

2018 is underway and it's already shaping up to be an exciting year of growth and endless potential for Dogs4Diabetics, and all those we impact with our efforts. As we all set our expectations and goals for the new year I have found myself reflecting on how grateful I am for the amazing community of friends, volunteers, foster care providers, partners, and supporters I have the pleasure of working with on a daily basis.

I realized the common thread to our success is the powerful partnerships we build with each and every one of you. You make all the great things we do at D4D possible and you are the very reason we are able to create life-saving partnerships for all those who turn to D4D for support.

As I settle into my new role as Executive Director I will continue to rely on Ralph's institutional knowledge during this transition period, and with your input, participation and support, you can be assured that Dogs4Diabetics has a bright future.



Your passion, commitment, and love for what we do is contagious and I want to make a promise to you. I will remain as passionate, committed, and devoted to our work and mission as you are. I will strive for excellence in anything and everything we do and never stop making sure we live up to our fullest potential as an organization.

In 2018 we will be fine-tuning our operations, evaluating and expanding all D4D programs, making improvements as necessary, and working to expand and grow our Client/Dog Team placements. And, as a team we are committed to constantly innovating and developing initiatives and resources to ensure we are meeting the needs of our community to ensure success.

You are a member of the D4D family and together we are strong... we can achieve and accomplish anything we set our minds to as a community. Let's make 2018 our best year yet! Our doors are open and I look forward to hearing from you, seeing you at the Nylabone Training Center, and achieving great things with you!

With gratitude,

Christy Gillham

Christy Gillham

Executive Director

HAPPY TAILS...

Working hard to meet graduation requirements, Aileen and Reva!

“Type 1 Diabetes (T1D) and I began our relationship a little over 35 years ago. I had all the usual and predictable telltale signs in the beginning blurred vision, unquenchable thirst, insatiable hunger and a fatigue so profound, I'd often fall sleep frequently during the work day. Discovering my T1D was suddenly asking me to pay closer attention to my well-being. I wanted to hide, feeling like a clunky and socially awkward 23 year-old with all the blood glucose testing and taking insulin shots in public. Eventually graduating to an insulin pump and continuous glucose monitor, helped with more grace and ease while tuning in to the many subtleties of the disease and how it played out in my body. As good as these tools are, my glucose levels still get wacky and unpredictable.

One day I was hanging out with a friend who was raising a puppy for Canines for Independence, she said "you know, there are service dogs that help support diabetics with blood sugars". I had no idea. Hearing her say that, I felt a magical feeling inside knowing that was to be my path. A Google search lead me to Dogs4Diabetics front door in early 2016. Sitting in the PAWS meeting sensing the organization's integrity and order I'll never forget the sounds that day in the room. There were the high-pitched pump alarms, CGMs going off with urgency and the familiar "pops" of test strip vials opening and closing in the background of D4D's detailed presentation.

Those sounds and the energy that day brought a flood of tears and gratitude for the opportunity in front of me and now two years later I can say whole heartedly that Dogs4Diabetics is far exceeding what I thought process would be. I appreciate the heart in D4D and love the perfection in the magical flow & timing of the program.

Even though I've been excited and filled with anticipation to be given the gift of an Alert Dog, I kept an internal dialogue alive in my heart and mind to relax and simply trust. The trainers made trusting them easy and the design of the program has brought me comfort and peace while waiting for the "one".

I've experienced so much happiness and glee watching others be placed with dogs and witnessing the deep bonds that are nourished and develop over time. Now sweet Reva is here with all of her talents and integrating so easily! Reva is such a love and so personable. When she grabs her bringsel she is so excited like it's the best thing ever, and it is!

It's been so fun making new friends and volunteering for a program I believe in because we are all in this together! There is no way I could ever repay D4D for all they have so generously given but it will be fun trying! Now, I walk in the world with Reva building our relationship and am willing to be a very visible diabetic, sharing about D4D along the way!”

- D4D Client, Aileen



A day of exploration and fun... Aileen and Reva visited the State Capitol.



Reva getting spoiled... a look of complete relaxation after her doggy massage.



Aileen and Reva enjoying their first trip to the beach together!

MEET OUR DOGS-IN-TRAINING...

Bandit, Collier, Keller, Naru, Newton, Sherlock, Swanee, and Troy!

Kickin' Training Tail...

Our dogs go through months of training to learn and perfect their life-saving skills. We love seeing their progression through our program and their skills grow... they're not just adorable faces, they're incredibly smart pups who will go on to transform, empower, and save the lives of our clients. We're so proud of all our dogs-in-training!



NARU



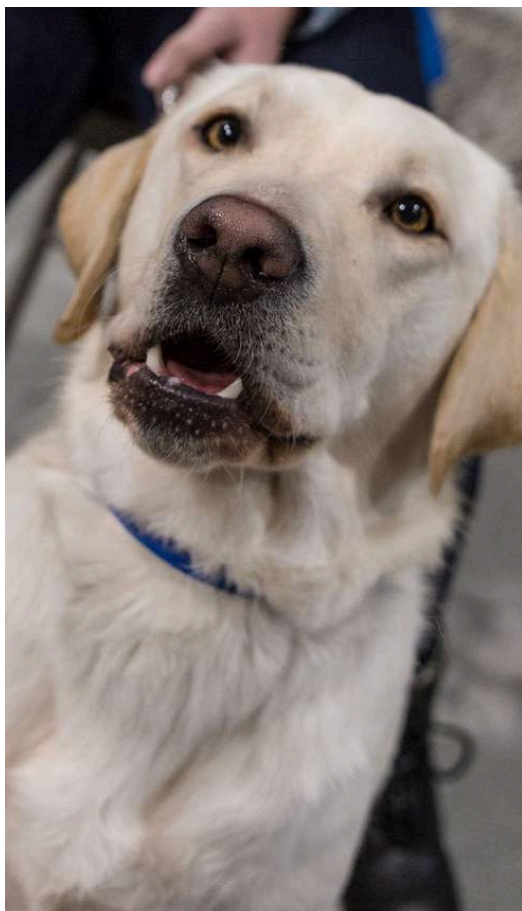
NEWTON



SWANEE



KELLER



COLLIER



TROY



SHERLOCK



BANDIT

ARMSTRONG'S DOG HOUSE

- by Hollis (Chief Canine Ambassador), and Mark Ruefenacht's trusted Medical-Alert Assistance Dog and Best Friend



Woof! Woof! Thanks for catching up with D4D and for reading this great newsletter! Danielle turned her job of reporting our dog news over to me late last year... she is fully retired now and spending her days relaxing and enjoying time with family.

As for me, I spend a lot of time with Mark traveling as well as spending time at D4D to proof scents for our dogs-in-training. When I am out traveling with Mark we get a lot of questions about how we dogs support people with diabetes.

Mark gets to go a lot of places and spends a lot of time talking about doing things the right way, with attention to quality, setting standards, and making sure that the work we dogs do is done right.

He also believes in always innovating so we can continue to adapt to better serve our clients. He really believes in the work we dogs do for our diabetic partners and enjoys sharing our story with those he meets.

Some of the exciting changes taking place at D4D include finding new ways to help people with diabetes. When new clients are interviewed, the staff talks to each one individually to figure out how we dogs can be helpful.

So, we could be trained to tell our clients about changing blood sugars, both lows and highs. We can also listen for CGM alarms or go get testing equipment or treats.

And one of the things I think is great is to help young children get through finger pricks or putting on pumps and CGMs. Being a distraction for kids that need that help simply means giving love on command! What a great job!

Also, I hope that you have been keeping up with the additional dog news about Bandit and Newton, two cute little guys that came to D4D from ARF. We are looking forward to seeing them learn all their obedience skills and commands. Then they can start training on scent and other tasks so they can work with one of our humans that would like a smaller dog. They are a lot of fun to have around. They are rescued by ARF in order to give them a new shot at a life, but little did they know what great lives they will live in the future, helping someone with diabetes. "Homeless to Hero Canines".

Stay tuned, with our new training center and the new dogs and clients coming into the program, we will be doing more every day... we hope to see you soon! Woof, Hollis!

TREATS FROM THE TRAINER... D4D and ARF!

- By Christina Hobson, D4D Trainer

As you know Dogs4Diabetics provides quality Medical-Alert Assistance Dogs and Diabetes Buddy Dogs to insulin-dependent diabetics through programs of training, placement, and follow-up services.

Hopefully by now you have also heard the incredible news D4D is partnering with Tony La Russa's Animal Rescue Foundation (ARF). ARF's core mission is the rescue of dogs and cats who have run out of time at public shelters, giving them a chance at life until a new home can be found. ARF couples this focus with innovative programs strengthening the human-animal bond for children, seniors, veterans, and people in disadvantaged circumstances.

Dogs4Diabetics is so excited to now have the opportunity to train these ARF rescue dogs and transform them into life-saving Medical-Alert Assistance Dogs or Diabetes Buddy Dogs. We are so happy to give these rescue dogs a new "leash" on life... and create truly homeless to hero stories for these sweet pups.

Once a week our trainers go to ARF and meet with their team who have already gone out and rescued and evaluated prospective dogs that meet the specific criteria D4D is looking for. Our trainers will then put the dogs through another evaluation before welcoming these newest heroes into the D4D family.

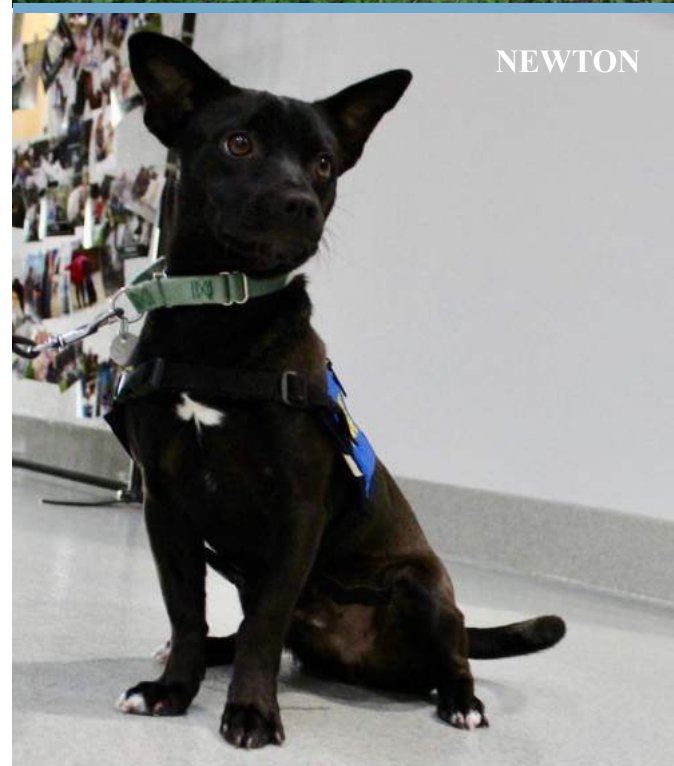
Since these fresh faces have varied and unknown pasts we have wonderful evaluation trainers that take these special canines into their homes to start teaching them what it's like to be a service dog.

We are taking this process slowly to make sure each dog is comfortable and confident with each step before adding more skills and training to their repertoire. We think each dog will be in these evaluation training homes for at least a year before entering the training center for formal training.

We are excited for this new program and can't wait to have our first ARF rescue dog graduate with their diabetic partner! Make sure to follow the progress of our current dogs, Bandit and Newton, on social media and Youtube.



BANDIT



NEWTON

Here are some of the training/skills these new Service Dogs will be learning...

Skills: Wearing a collar, walking on leash, housebreaking, house manners, socialization to other animals and dogs, and community socialization.

Training: Learning obedience, learning how to offer behaviors and use their nose to search.

HELP US CHEER THEM ON...

These Client/Dog Teams are working hard to meet graduation requirements!



MAUREEN AND ROVER



KEN AND MALONE



TIM AND GABE



SARA AND SCOTTY



MIKE AND DARLING



SAMANTHA AND MEGUMI



AILEEN AND REVA



BEN AND HATCHER



SOMMER AND ROBIE

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT...

Meet our new volunteer Outreach Coordinator, D4D Client, Kim Denton!

We are so excited to share Kim Denton has generously offered to volunteer her time and coordinate all Dogs4Diabetics outreach efforts. This is such an incredible help and gift!

It is so important now more than ever to get out in our surrounding communities and spread the word about what we do, who we are, and our mission in the diabetic community. As you know we are only as strong as those who support our wonderful efforts through volunteering, fostering, being a donor, or simply being a friend to the organization.

If you're interested in volunteering your time and live near our Nylabone Training Center please give us a call!

A huge thank you to Kim from the D4D Team for taking on this important effort!



"I feel strongly that we should give back to our communities, and the D4D community not only changed my life with a life-saving dog, but it also brought me into a wonderful "family" who supports us through our daily roller coaster of diabetes management. The great friendships made come as an added plus! Volunteering for D4D has become the sunshine in my day!"

DONATE

Thank you to each and every donor, your donations, large and small, contribute to the success of our program!

- Donate online at www.Dogs4Diabetics.com
- Mail in a donation to: Dogs for Diabetics, Inc.
1647 Willow Pass Road, #157
Concord, CA 94520-2611
- Or visit www.dogs4diabetics.com/donate/ to find out the various other ways you can contribute

D4D THANKS YOU

Thanks to all who've made this newsletter possible:

- Mary Hooker, Yellow Neener Photography
- Christy Gillham, Executive Director
- Ralph Hendrix, Director of Finance and Vice President
- Carrie Treggett, Programs Manager
- Christina Hobson, Trainer
- Diane Ketcham, Programs Coordinator
- Ryan Arter, Program Assistant

Like us on **FACEBOOK** (@OfficialDogs4Diabetics), follow us on **INSTAGRAM** (D4D_Official)... and share us with your friends! Also, watch us on **YOUTUBE** (Dogs4Diabetics).



This life-saving partnership is made possible by all you who support Dogs4Diabetics and are as passionate as we are about making a difference in the diabetic community.

"Hatcher knows... he picks up the drop in Ben's blood sugar before the CGM and helps us head off potential stubborn highs. Thank you D4D!" - Ben's Mom, Jamie

A special thank you to all our supporters who make these powerful partnerships possible!

You're empowering and transforming the lives of all those who turn to D4D for support!

CORPORATE SPONSORS

BECOME A PARTNER OF D4D...

The following organizations have supported Dogs for Diabetics, Inc. for many years with donations of dogs, financial resources and various other goods and services which have been critical to D4D's mission. They have earned the right to be thought of as Partners to the Achievement of our Mission.

We are able to provide our great dogs to insulin-dependent diabetic clients at virtually no cost to them, through the generous support of our supporters. D4D relies on the support of individuals, foundations, and corporations. We would like to honor and thank these donors for their support, which in many cases, has been provided over several years.

The D4D Family Thanks You:

- Allied World Insurance Company
- AvoDerm
- Bollinger Canyon Animal Hospital
- Canine Companions for Independence
- Central Garden & Pet
- Four Paws
- Guide Dogs for the Blind
- Lagunitas Brewing Company
- Nylabone
- Pet Food Express
- Presidio Bank
- Worldwise Inc.

We welcome other organizations to develop a similar commitment to serve the Medical-Alert Assistance Dog community throughout the United States and the world.